UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/756
15 December 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 124

IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part I)

Rapporteur: Mr. Mahbub KABIR (Bangladesh)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 24 September 1993, the General Assembly decided to include in the agenda of its forty-eighth session the item entitled "Improving the financial situation of the United Nations" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. The Fifth Committee considered this item at its 20th, 22nd to 25th and 37th meetings, held on 18 November, 22 to 29 November and 11 December 1993.

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on an analysis of the financial situation of the United Nations (A/48/503 and Add.1);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on financing an effective United Nations (A/48/460 and Corr.1);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on financing an effective United Nations: a report of the Independent Advisory Group on United Nations financing (A/48/565 and Corr.1).

4. The statements and comments made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/48/SR.20, 22-25 and 37).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/48/L.9

5. At the 37th meeting, on 11 December, Ms. Regina Emerson (Portugal), Vice-Chairman, following informal consultations, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.5/48/L.9).

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.9 without a vote (see para. 7).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

7. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Improving the financial situation of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/215 of 23 December 1992,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General 1/ and the relevant recommendations contained in his report A/48/565,

Recognizing the need for a continuing dialogue at the intergovernmental level to analyse possible solutions for the improvement of the financial situation of the Organization,

1. Reaffirms the obligation of Member States to pay assessed contributions promptly and in full;

2. Recognizes that non-payment of assessed contributions in full and on time has damaged and continues to damage the ability of the Organization to implement its activities effectively;

3. Decides to continue consideration of this item and, inter alia, the above-mentioned reports, at its resumed forty-eighth session.

1/ A/48/503 and Add.1 and A/48/565 and Corr.1.

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Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/757
14 December 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 138 (a)

ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

Support account for peace-keeping operations

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the support account for peace-keeping operations (A/48/470).

2. As indicated in paragraph 2 of the introduction to the Secretary-General's report, the Advisory Committee, in its report (A/47/757), inter alia, recommended that:

> "Consideration be given to submitting annual budget estimates for the support account based on the costs of current peace-keeping operations which may be updated in the context of the submission of revised estimates, and to granting the Secretary-General a transitional period to assess the practicality and feasibility of proposing annual funding arrangements for overhead costs, including programme support, rental of office space and acquisition of equipment, on a pro rata basis for all peace-keeping operations."

3. A report was submitted to the Advisory Committee in July 1993; however, the Committee was of the opinion that, because the report expanded considerably the use of the support account, it should be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration. In the meantime, to provide urgent relief to the offices concerned, the Committee concurred in charging the support account $4 million to cover, inter alia, the cost of 72 posts for four months, the cost for the development of a situation room for peace-keeping operations, software enhancement, special equipment for the Medical Service and provisions for translation services.

4. Pursuant to the Committee's recommendation, the Secretary-General has submitted the report on support account for peace-keeping operations (A/48/470). Section II of that report addresses the question of annualized budget estimates for the support account; section III discusses the methodology and funding arrangements of the account; and section IV discusses resource requirements in 1993-1994. In section V, the Secretary-General summarizes the action requested of the Assembly, namely, (a) a decision to establish annualized budget estimates for the support account; (b) a decision to continue the current funding arrangements for the support account, that is, to include in each peace-keeping operation's budget a provision equal to 8.5 per cent of the cost of the mission's civilian component; and (c) an authorization to provide from the support account the resource requirements for 1993 and 1994 as set forth in the report, including the amount of $4 million with which the Advisory Committee concurred.

5. Owing to the Committee's examination of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 during its current session, the Committee was unable to consider the report on the support account in detail prior to 6 December 1993. That being the case and bearing in mind that it has yet to consider estimates for 17 peace-keeping operations, as well as a number of other reports with budgetary implications before the end of the year, the Committee was not in a position to request and receive the additional information and analysis necessary for consideration of the proposals regarding annualized budget estimates and the methodology and funding arrangements of the support account. Those subjects are important and, in the opinion of the Committee, deserve a thorough review.

6. The Committee therefore defers action on those proposals until its session next spring. In that connection, it requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to it for consideration at that time. The report should contain concrete proposals and a rationale for the scope and use of the support account, as well as for the scope and use of the regular budget for financing backstopping activities of peace-keeping operations. The Committee requests that the criteria for distinguishing between the backstopping of peace-keeping operations and other activities be presented, thereby enabling the Committee to determine the funding of various posts (see also para. 18 below).

7. The Committee's recommendations concerning section IV of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/470), that is, resource requirements in 1993 and 1994, are set forth in the paragraphs below. In this connection, the Committee's recommendations for 1994 in respect of the Secretary-General's request are for the first six months (January-June); the Secretary-General is requested to submit any requirements for the period July-December 1994 to the Committee at its spring session in the context of the above-mentioned report. The recommendations in the paragraphs below are made without prejudice to the position the Committee may take concerning the issues referred to in paragraph 6 above and do not imply a change by the Advisory Committee to the scope and use of the support account, as referred to in General Assembly resolutions 45/258 and 47/218 A.

8. The resource requirements requested by the Secretary-General relate to both staff costs and to other objects of expenditure. Requirements for the latter

are discussed in paragraphs 24-37 of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/470). The Advisory Committee notes that the amounts listed in those paragraphs in respect of 1993 represent the totality of the requirements as presented to the Committee in July; that is, they do not take into account the $4 million authorized by the Committee, some of which was used for non-staff costs.

9. In paragraphs 27-33 of his report, the Secretary-General discusses requirements in 1993 for relocation and associated costs, equipment and communication costs, software enhancement and contractual services. The Committee notes from annex XIII of his report that a total amount of $2,210,000 has been spent thus far in 1993 in respect of those items, pursuant to the Committee's concurrence.

10. In response to inquiries, representatives of the Secretary-General confirmed that no expenditures had been incurred in 1993 for the objects of expenditure discussed in paragraphs 24-26 of the Secretary-General's report (travel and training) since no authorization had been granted in respect of those items.

11. As discussed in paragraphs 34-36 of the Secretary-General's report, the requested provision for contractual services in 1993 (of which $330,000 was authorized) related to the request for contractual translation services to process the backlog of documentation. In response to inquiry, the Committee was informed that the Office of Conference Services had also requested a provision to restore meetings scheduling capacity relating to the provision of interpretation to some ad hoc bodies which previously had been able to anticipate services on an as available basis; such a request has not been included in the Secretary-General's report.

12. Requirements in 1994 for the non-staff costs discussed in paragraphs 24-37 of the Secretary-General's report are limited to an amount of $365,000 for travel. As indicated in paragraph 24, that amount comprises $325,000 in respect of the Stand-by Forces Management Unit of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and $40,000 for the Peace-keeping Finance Division. (The Committee was informed that the figure of $375,000 indicated in paragraph 24 should be corrected to read $325,000.) The Advisory Committee does not concur in the amount of $40,000. It recommends that an amount of $150,000 be authorized at this stage to cover the travel of the Stand-by Forces Management Unit.

13. As recalled in the Secretary-General's report, as of 1 May 1993, 194 posts were financed from the support account; the equivalent of 40 additional posts were funded under general temporary assistance. In July 1993, the Committee's concurrence was sought for the establishment of 199 additional posts; as indicated, the Committee concurred in the creation of 72 posts for four months, August to November 1993.

14. As shown under new proposals in annex X, the Secretary-General's request for the balance of 127 new posts would have related, in respect of 1993, to the period November-December. The Committee notes from the same annex that the 72 posts, authorized by the Committee in July, are listed for the period August-December 1993. The Committee points out that, strictly speaking, the new

proposals in annex X should have included the 72 posts for the one-month period of December.

15. Additional information is provided in annex IV in respect of the 199 posts and their distribution by organizational unit in both 1993 and 1994. The distribution that would have been effected for 1993 can be summarized as follows:

DPKO (excluding FOD)	83
FOD	63
DPI	1
DAM (excluding IAD)	49
IAD	3
Total	199

16. As indicated in paragraph 19 and annex IV, the above distribution would change in 1994; a number of redeployments among the various units are proposed. Although the tables in annex V show those redeployments, the Advisory Committee believes that the presentation in annex IV could have been more clear.

17. An evaluation of the proposed 199 posts was made even more difficult by the lack of information regarding the staff resources available (from any funding source) in the units outlined in annex IV. The tables in annex V provide this information on a department/office level, but not always for the units outlined in annex IV. For example, information is provided on the totality of staff in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, but no information on the Situation Room within that Department, for which a substantial number of posts are requested, as outlined in annex IV.

18. The Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the proposed 199 posts by organizational unit corresponding to the breakdown in annex IV are summarized below, supplemented by observations in respect of units which, in the Committee's view, require particular clarification. As stated above, those recommendations relate to the period January-June 1994. The Committee requests the Secretary-General, in the context of the report requested in paragraph 6 above, to submit his detailed staffing requirements for the balance of 1994. The Committee further recommends that the Secretary-General should indicate the results of workload studies to justify the staffing levels and complements being proposed in each unit; information regarding whether the posts have been duly classified should also be included. More information is required in many instances regarding the functions of the proposed posts. In requesting the above, the Committee would like to point out that, according to representatives of the Secretary-General, the staffing needs of a number of the units for which posts have been requested have not yet been absolutely determined. In that connection, the Committee also requests that the rationale for the establishment of separate units to carry out various functions be fully explained. Upon receipt of the above information, the Committee will be in a better position to comment in detail on both the number and levels of posts being requested.

19. As shown in the table following paragraph 32 below, the Advisory Committee recommends a total of 15 posts for the Situation Room, including one P-5 as the Chief, one P-4 as Deputy Chief, one General Service for their support, and four additional P-4, four P-3 and four General Service posts to provide staffing for each of the four shifts envisaged.

20. The Secretary-General's proposals regarding the Situation Room were particularly difficult to understand, in part because of the redeployments from the Situation Room in 1994, as indicated in paragraph 19, and in view of the Secretary-General's proposals in the proposed programme budget for the creation of 10 regular budget posts for the Situation Room (A/48/6 (sect. 4), para. 4.9) and the Advisory Committee's related report (A/48/7, para. II.48).

21. The Committee was informed that 20 posts were required for the Situation Room. Two of those 20 posts were provided from posts already approved under the support account prior to May 1993. Accordingly, for 1993, as set forth in detail in annex IV, an additional 18 posts were requested. The Committee was further informed that it is proposed that the 20 posts will be distributed as follows: 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 6 P-4, 4 P-3, and 6 General Service. As of 1 January 1994, 10 of those posts (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3 and 3 GS) were to be redeployed to other units and replaced by 10 regular budget posts.

22. Taking into account that the Situation Room is expected to provide direct operational support to peace-keeping operations in the field, as well as the fact that the Committee did not receive sufficient justification for the establishment of the 10 regular budget posts for the Situation Room, the Committee does not agree to the establishment of those posts. It recommends that, at this stage, the Situation Room should be staffed by 15 posts funded from the support account (1 P-5, 5 P-4, 4 P-3 and 5 GS), pending the Committee's consideration of the Secretary-General's report at its spring session. In making this recommendation, the Committee notes that, as indicated by representatives of the Secretary-General, the actual working arrangements of the Situation Room regarding, for example, shift arrangements, were not yet finalized and that the actual concept regarding how the work would be performed was still being developed.

23. The Committee also recommends that, in the above-mentioned report, the Secretary-General should submit a clear analysis of what he considers the most reasonable way of staffing and operating a 24-hour, 7-day week Situation Room, taking into account the Staff Regulations and Rules. In that connection, information should be provided regarding the composition of each shift team and the assigned duties of each staff member in the Situation Room, thereby enabling the Committee to comment better on the appropriate levels and number of staff. The Committee also requests data regarding the percentage of work in the Situation Room currently devoted to Good Offices, Peace-keeping Operations and other field operations. In that regard, the Committee notes General Assembly resolution 48/42, in which the Assembly

> "Welcomes the establishment in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations of a 24-hour/7-day-a-week situation centre which will be equipped with appropriately standardized communications and information management systems so as to enhance the management of all peace-keeping

operations and requests the Secretary-General to keep under review the efficiency and efficacy of the situation centre" (para. 34).

24. The Committee questions the need to establish a separate policy and analysis unit for the purposes indicated in the Secretary-General's report. In so stating, the Committee does not question that there is a function to be undertaken. The Committee is of the view, however, that the function of the gathering of experience and information relating to the performance specific to the peace-keeping operations should be performed by the entire Department and coordinated by the incumbent of the P-4 post recommended by the Committee (see para. 32 below).

25. The Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/71, reiterated its invitation to the Secretary-General to consider identifying a focal point for contact by Member States seeking information on all facets, including operational logistics and administrative matters, of ongoing and planned peace-keeping operations. The Assembly, in its resolution 48/42, repeated that invitation. In the opinion of the Committee, there is no need to establish a separate unit. Rather it recommends that the incumbent of the P-5 post that it is recommending for this function be located in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General.

26. The Committee points out that its recommendation for no additional posts at this stage for the Stand-by Forces Management Unit took into account the fact that the resources requested are to maintain and update the stand-by agreements. Until such time as those agreements are concluded, the Committee sees no reason to provide additional posts for that purpose.

27. As indicated in paragraph 1 (e) (viii) of annex IV, a P-4 post is proposed for a Computer Information Specialist. The Committee recommends that this function be performed by the Electronic Services Division (ESD); consequently it does not recommend the establishment of this post.

28. The Committee, as indicated below, does not recommend the P-5 post being requested to strengthen the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General; it questions the statement in paragraph 3 of annex IV that "the overload on the current staff [of DPI] has made it impossible, without this additional post, to provide the increased attention to activities of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations".

29. In recommending three additional P-3 posts for the Internal Audit Division, the Advisory Committee emphasizes its support for strengthening the capacity of that Division. At the same time, the Committee does not wish at this stage to endorse internal organizational arrangements, as discussed in paragraph 4 of annex IV of the Secretary-General's report. Consequently, in the opinion of the Committee, there is no need for a post at the P-5 level to be head of Section.

30. In paragraph 18 above, the Advisory Committee indicates the general concerns which underlie its recommendations regarding posts. As stated in that paragraph, those concerns should be addressed in the report requested in paragraph 6 above. The Advisory Committee, for a number of its recommendations, has felt it necessary to provide additional explanation and/or comment; these

are contained in paragraphs 19-29 above. In light of what has been stated in paragraphs 19 to 29 above, and pending submission by the Secretary-General of the further report requested by the Advisory Committee, the Committee recommends that, of the requested 199 posts, a total of 148 be authorized for six months, as follows:

	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	G-7	GS	Total
Secretary-General's proposals									
First 72 posts	1	2	3	17	12	1	1	35	72
Balance of 127 posts	-	4	7	26	16	4	2	68	127
Total	1	6	10	43	28	5	3	103	199
Advisory Committee's recommendation		3	5	26	29	5	3	77	148

31. By Department/Office, the 148 would be distributed as follows:

DPKO (excluding FOD)	42
FOD	64
DPI	-
OII (proposed IAD)	3
DAM	39
Total	148

32. The breakdown of these posts corresponding to the units in annex IV is as follows:

Unit	Recommended posts	A/48/470, annex IV, paragraph reference
I. DEPARTMENT OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS		
Office of the USG	D-1	1 (a) (i)
Situation Room	1 P-5, 5 P-4, 4 P-3, 5 GS	1 (a) (ii-v)
Policy and Analysis Unit	1 P-4, 1 GS (OL)	1 (a) (vi)
Focal Point Unit	1 P-5	1 (a) (vii)
Executive Office	-	1 (a) (viii)
African Division	1 P-5	1 (b)
Asia and Middle East Division	1 P-4	1 (c)
Europe and Latin America Division	1 D-1	1 (d)
Military Advisers Office	1 D-1	1 (e) (i)
Planning Section	4 P-4, 3 P-3, 2 GS	1 (e) (ii)
Stand-by Forces Management Unit	-	1 (e) (iii)
Military Division (Training	1 P-5	1 (e) (iv)
Military Division (Police Adviser)	1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 GS	1 (e) (v)
Military Division (Personnel Management)	2 GS (Principal) 2 GS (OL)	1 (e) (vi)
Military Division (Reports)	-	1 (e) (vii)
Military Division (Computer Information)	-	1 (e) (viii)
Military Division (Regional Divisions)	2 P-4	1 (e) (ix)
Subtotal DPKO (excluding FOD) 42 posts:	3 D-1, 5 P-5, 14 P-4, 7 P-3, 2 GS (Principal), 11 GS (OL)	

Unit	Recommended posts	A/48/470, annex IV, paragraph reference
II. FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION		
Office of the Director	2 GS	2 (a)
Planning Coordination and Information Services	3 GS	2 (b)
Field Personnel Section	1 P-3, 8 GS (OL)	2 (c)
Field Finance and Budget Section	2 P-4, 6 P-3, 3 P-2, 1 GS (Principal), 12 GS (OL)	2 (d)
Logistics and Communications Section	2 P-4, 3 P-3, 2 P-2, 19 GS	2 (e)
Subtotal FOD 64 posts: 4 P-4, 10 P-3, 5 P-2, 45 GS (including 1 at Principal Level)		
III. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION		
Office of Spokesman	-	3
IV. OFFICE OF INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS		
Internal Audit Division	3 P-3	4
V. DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT		
Office of Security Coordinator	1 P-4	5
Peace-keeping Financing Division	2 P-4, 3 P-3, 3 GS	5 (a)
Accounts Division		
Operational Accounts Section	2 P-3, 2 GS	5 (b) (i)
Payroll Unit	1 P-4, 2 GS	5 (b) (ii) (a)
Income Tax Unit	-	5 (b) (ii) (b)
Treasury Division	1 GS	5 (c)
Recruitment and Placement Division	2 P-4, 5 GS	5 (d)
Staff Administration and Training Division	1 GS	5 (e)

Unit	Recommended posts	A/48/470, annex IV, paragraph reference
Medical and Employee Assistance	1 P-3, 2 GS	5 (f)
Buildings Management Service	-	5 (g)
Purchase and Transportation Service	2 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 GS	5 (h)
Electronic Services Division	-	5 (i)
Subtotal DAM 39 posts: 8 P-4, 9 P-3, 22 GS		

33. In addition to the costs of 393 posts in 1994 (194 approved prior to May 1993 and the 199 proposed by the Secretary-General in his current report), the expenditure estimate for 1994 includes, as shown in annex XII and discussed in paragraphs 22-23, a provision of $594,000 for general temporary assistance and $190,000 for overtime. The Advisory Committee recommends that $200,000 and $50,000 be authorized for those purposes, respectively, for the six-month period. The Committee notes that it is intended to use part of the general temporary assistance to finance a position at the Under-Secretary-General level in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The Committee does not object to the continuation of that position. It proposes to revert to the funding modality in the context of the report requested in paragraph 18 above.

34. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly should authorize $16,376,250 in 1994 to cover costs borne by the Support Account for the six-month period January-June 1994. This includes the cost of the 194 posts previously approved prior to May 1993 and the 148 posts now being recommended by the Committee pending the submission of the Secretary-General's report. It also includes provisions for general temporary assistance, overtime, travel and common services.